The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Age is a matter of feeling, not years. — George William Curtis.

WHOLE NO. 1025. WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1930 FRANK MORRISON, Secretary VOL. 20, NO. 38.

RAIL LABOR IS SOLID FOR SHORTER HOURS

Chicago, Nov. 29.—Railroad employes on the class 1 roads made industrial history in this city when they launched two movements for less working hours.

The Executive Board of the Railroad Shop Employes' Department, A. F. of L. agreed to present a five-day week demand to rail managers.

A six-hour day was asked by several hundred general chairmen of the "Big Four" rail brotherhoods and the Switchmen's Union of North America. This conference arranged another meeting in Cleveland, December 4, which will be attended by interested parties.

International unions comprising the Shop Employes' Department are machinists, railway carmen, electrical workers, blacksmiths, boiler makers and sheet metal workers.

While these two movements outwardly differ, there are strong bonds of friendship between the shop men and train-spotation workers.

Conditions for hour changes on railroads differ from 1916 when the Adamson law was passed. Under the present Railway Labor Act the key hour plan will be submitted to rail executives. If the plan is rejected, the Federal Mediation Board will be called in. If this fails, the workers may call on the President of the United States to appoint an emergency board.

Such legal provisions were not in existence in 1916.

LOW BUSINESS HONOR IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

New York, Nov. 29.—Business men in the textile industry were classed without honor by Charles L. Bernheimer of the Council of Textile Association Executives at a meeting attended by 400 textile business men.

The indictment was extended to other industries by the speaker, who indicated that certain groups have little business honor.

"Lying and stealing, and not overproduction or the Sherman anti-trust law, are the bane of the textile world," said Mr. Bernheimer.

"We say misrepresenting, misinforming, misstating, pretending, when in reality we mean lying. We say copying, reproducing, cheapening other peoples' hard earned property in styles and ideas, when in reality we mean stealing.

"What I say of the textile industry applies to a great many other lines of business and adversely affects the consuming public. Only because of long long association in the textile industry do I refer to it. What I am certain applies to textile, I am very sure is true of other industries."

Mr. Bernheimer is confident that leaders in industry will condemn the unmoral practices and that they will refuse to have business relations with liars and thieves.

UNIONISTS IN DETROIT FEED HUNGRY MEMBERS

Detroit, Mich., Nov. 29.—The local Federation of Labor's dining room, in which hungry members of organized labor are fed, is a tribute to labor's co-operation and efficiency.

Two wholesome meals are daily served to any person who presents his union card.

The dining room is operated by volunteers from the ranks of organized labor. Dishes are washed and the kitchen kept clean by men who gladly offer their services after being fed.

The unions have been contributing all costs, which have increased, and now the city, through the assistance of Mayor Murphy, is assuming part of the cost.

The dining room and kitchen, with space and equipment, have been loaned by Fraternal Order of Eagles.

MINERS FAVOR LEWIS

Indianapolis, Nov. 29.—Ballots forwarded to local unions by the United Mine Workers before the re-election of President Lewis and other officers at the referendum to be held December 5. No contestants were nominated by affiliates.

TALK AND CHARITY CAN'T CURE UNEMPLOYMENT

Declarations that "American initiative and intelligence will solve unemployment" bring shouts of approval, but these declarations do not necessarily mean anything.

Charity is being distributed and millions of additional dollars will be necessary to care for the millions of jobless and hungry. Our boasted "American initiative," however, has done nothing to solve unemployment.

Our whole policy seems to be based on the theory that if we get over this depression some one, some how, some way, will rescue us from another depression which the machine age makes inevitable.

Wrongful economic conditions are not righted by charity doles and hope for a better day.

It is no solution, for instance, when one of the nation's largest industrial corporations that still applies the long work-day, and has millions of undivided profits in its treasury, contributes $50,000 to feed New York City's hungry.

Men who exploit workers and who dodge excess profits and income taxes throw a few thousand dollars to the workless and talk of "American initiative" to end unemployment.

This is no advance from the days of ancient Rome when the hungry were not only fed, but were amused.

Workers have been told for more than a year that prosperity is just around the corner. This is not true. Statistical information points to curtailment in basic industries.

Steel production, for instance, is as low as 46 per cent of capacity. Auto output is off 58 per cent from October of last year.

If we would attack unemployment let us stop talking and apply such easily understood remedies as placing men to work by reducing the work day.

Take the 44-hour week for postal employes, now pending in Congress.

The government should be the first to reduce hours. But notice how that bill will be opposed by men who give to charity, but who will not change working conditions until they are compelled to change.

They will continue to oppose this until can be charged to overhead and their income tax payments are reduced.

They are strong for charity, but not for social justice which would compel them to yield some of their present powers.

Opposition of this element to the postal workers' 44-hour bill is indicative of the attitude of men in the machine age who cling to the old and who generalize about "American initiative solving the unemployment problem."

RACKETEERS GRIP NEW YORK CITY; GANG METHODS TO FIGHT WORKERS

New York, Nov. 29.—The district attorney invited 50 representative citizens to confer with him on how to combat racketeers who levy tribute on practically every industry and calling in this city.

The district attorney's list included clergymen, trade unionists, publishers, State officials, industrialists and bankers.

Benjamin Schlesinger, president International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, estimates that $2,000,000 is taken out of the local garment industry every year by these racketeers.

The racketeer terrifies business men to make monthly contributions by threats of physical violence or bombing their plants.

Racketeering is considered a good investment by the long-boner, a low-wage employer who finds a profit in operating on the anti-union basis. Gangsters and strong-arm men keep unionists from these non-union plants. If a unionist fails, they orders he is "taken for a ride."

The district attorney said racketeers "have their hands in everything from the cradle to the grave—from babies' milk to funeral coaches."

It is estimated that gangdom shakes down $5,000,000 annually from consignees of ship and railroad freight, levying a tribute of 3 cents on every hundred weight of goods delivered here. Every pier and railroad station in this city but one is dominated by racketeers, it is stated.

Laundries and cleaning and dyeing shops contribute $1,000,000 to save garments placed in their care from being slashed, stolen or ruined by acid.

DODGING PORTO RICO ISSUE

A government official, after a month's visit in Porto Rico, favors vocational education for workers in that island.

"The only way in which the human resources of Porto Rico can be developed is by making the individual workers in industry and in industry more intelligent and more resourceful in the performance of their work."

Vocational education is needed in Porto Rico, but the first essential is to wrench that island from absentee landlords and other exploiters who have seized the land and driven peasants into cities where they are forced to labor at uncertain employment for wages that range from 40 to 60 cents a day.

The exploiters refuse to pay taxes, and education and sanitation lags. There are 100,000 workmen's compensation cases where the injured employee is not receiving payments awarded him.

In view of these glaring injustices, it is dodging the issue to talk of vocational education to make workers "more resourceful."

STOCKS DEFLATED; MILLIONS ARE LOST

New York, Nov. 29.—These are sorrowful days for "friends of labor" who have been advising workers that employes' stock ownership is a remedy for industrial ills.

During the first ten months of this year, corporation directors passed (unable to pay) 637 dividends and decreased 297 dividends, figures which are prepared by Standard Statistics Company, are sensational increases over the similar period of 1929, when 146 passed and 48 decreased dividends.

Workers who may have a few hundred dollars in savings will be interested in the list of bond defaults that has been prepared by Standard Statistics Company, in its new edition of "Status of Bonds."

There is a popular impression that bonds, as mortgages, are copper riveted securities. The Statistics Company lists 748 major bond issues, involving a total of more than a billion and a half dollars, which have been defaulted either as to interest or principal in the past seven years.

Industrial bonds led with 279 defaulting issues that had a loss of $583,558,000. Bonds issued against real estate are supposed to be a sound investment, but there were 248 issues of these bonds reported defaulted. Public utility bonds to the number of 168 defaulted, and 50 railroad bonds ceased paying interest or principal.

P. O. NOT FOR PROFIT AS IN PRIVATE AFFAIRS

Washington, Nov. 29.—Claims that the post office should be run "on a strictly business basis" were ridiculed by Congressman Kelly, who is a member of the House Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads.

"The Post Office Department's primary function is to give service, and that one factor makes it noncomparable to a private business," said Mr. Kelly.

"A private business is run for profits. The post office is operated to serve the people. Profits are not considered.

"Persons who talk of running the post office on a business basis would naturally abandon the rural free delivery, which operates at an annual loss of $50,000,000.

"This one item illustrates the difference between a business run for service and a business that has the profit objective."

FEDERAL POWER LAW UNDER COURT PROBE

Washington, Nov. 29.—The State of Pennsylvania has asked the District of Columbia Supreme Court for permission to intervene in the case of Clarion River Power Company versus Federal Power Commission.

Behind this simple announcement are moves that may wreck the Federal Water Power Act, passed 10 years ago after long and strenuous conflicts with private exploiters of natural resources.

The Clarion River case follows a ruling by United States Attorney General Mitchell, in which the effectiveness of the Federal Water Power Act was injured. The attorney general, sworn to uphold the law, quietly presented the power trust interpretation and has placed the private power interests in a favorable position.

The power trust power group took advantage of the attorney General's decision at the first opportunity, and if the suit filed by the Clarion River Power Company is successful the commission is upheld the Federal power law will be upset.

The commission is attempting to wring $6,300,000 of water out of this concern that would demand interest charges on fake costs that have been written into their liabilities.

The commission's chief accountant has ruled that the $6,300,000 claim is unlawful, and the company asks for an injunction to stop this annoying interference whenever they capitalize water.

BRITISH TORIES CHEER ATTACK ON PARLIAMENT

London, Nov. 29.—The British system of lawmaking can not save this country from ruin, Winston Churchill declared Wiston Churchill at a meeting of Conservatives. They cheered this one factor makes it noncomparable to a private business," said Mr. Kelly. this utterance. Churchill is leader of Tory and was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the last Conservative (Baldwin) administration.

"Our electorate has been expanded until it has far exceeded the bounds of the politically interested classes," said Churchill. At this stage we ought to have the proper machinery for considering great economic issues. I don't think the party machinery is going to do the job well."

The Churchill suggestion can be interpreted to mean that the Conservatives are now outnumbered and that if they are to regain control, and check growing attacks on vested interests, new governmental systems must be devised.

STREET CAR SYSTEM "LEGALIZED RACKET"

Milwaukee, Nov. 29.—The city council is now considering an attorney to prepare a bill that will curb the Wisconsin railroad commission. The bill will be submitted to the legislature.

Alderman Gauer, who introduced the resolution, referred to present policies as a "racket" system and said it is "the greatest legalized racket of all time."

"Notwithstanding facilities for cheaper power, one-man street cars, labor-saving machinery and growth of the city, street car rates have increased so as to be a hardship upon thousands of people of moderate means," he said.

"RED TAPE" SCORED FOR RELIEF DELAY

Washington, Nov. 29.—"Red tape" in the Treasury Department was blamed by Congressman La Guardia for delay in starting public buildings.

CHILD BUREAU FOES LAUNCH OLD SCHEME

Washington, Nov. 29.—An attempt to dismantle the United States Children's Bureau, by turning infancy care and administration of maternity over to the United States Public Health Service, was made at the conference on child health, called by the President.

The old scheme of hampering useful bureaus failed. Miss Grace Abbott, chief of the Children's Bureau, made a brave single-handed fight in the committee. It was carried to the floor of the conference, where Miss Abbott received such unexpected support that the divisionists postponed action.

Opponents included trade unionists, women's organizations and Secretary of Labor Davis. The latter reminded the conference of the staffs of specialists and scientists who have been assembled by the Children's Bureau.

The Children's Bureau, as now conducted, tells the country the effect of low wages received by bread winners, and why this forces children into industry. The bureau's investigations are not welcomed by child labor employers, who resent having the nation continually reminded of the evils of child labor and the harm that follows low wages to adults.

If the work of the Children's Bureau can be divided with the Public Health Service, there will be less of this information, as medical men are not economists.

PROPOSED WAGE CUTS RESISTED IN ENGLAND

London, England, Nov. 29.—Organized miners and railway workers are bitter over proposed wage cuts that total millions of pounds sterling.

The railroads would reduce shop workers £1,500,000 (approximately $7,500,000) a year, in addition to reductions of £9,500,000 ($47,500,000) previously demanded from transportation workers.

Mine owners demand wage reductions to equalize the reduction of one-half an hour, following the national strike four years ago. This reduction does not include so-called "winding time," which means the time necessary to descend deep mines and reach workings that are far underground from the opening of the pit.

The miners are especially bitter over the proposed wage cut. Two royal commissions investigated the mining industry and revealed the millions of pounds sterling that are paid in royalties to owners of mines, many of whom have never seen their properties.

If a strike is called by the workers in these two leading industries, Britain's unemployed, whose number is steadily increasing, will reach dangerous proportions.

HOME SAFETY FACTOR HAS SMALL AVERAGE

Washington, Nov. 29.—"We think of home as the safest place in the world, but it's the most hazardous," Lois L. Dublin, insurance statistician, told a section of the President's child protection conference.

"There are stepladders that collapse, shaky chairs used for reaching, improvised and crude implements, and fire," he said.

He forecast that by the end of 1930 America will have counted 100,000 fatalities for the year—each one contributing to the dependency and handicap of a child.

Of this number, he said, 23,000 deaths, mostly women, would be due to perils of the home, a like number in industry, and 54,000 in public places. The majority of the latter was placed on the auto.

"Cars should not be sold on the score of speed," Dublin said. "That is an anti-social act and should be subject to penalty."

INSTALLMENT BUYING DOESN'T HARM NATION

Baltimore, Nov. 29.—The average loss on bad debts in this country is but six-tenths of one per cent, according to Edwin B. George of the Federal Department of Commerce, at a meeting of retail credit men.

Instalment buying ranges between four and five billion dollars a year and $15,000,000,000 more of goods are sold on open credit, said Mr. George.

"Despite this annual retail bill of $20,000,000,000 that is based on credit," he said, "the grocer, the butcher and the candlestick maker usually get their money and the last painful instalment is usually paid."

The speaker said that the first survey of retail credit practices by the Department of Commerce show that credits extended in the past has been cut; that the highest credit loss, 1.5 per cent. Radio sets and supply stores were second, with a current loss of 1.4 per cent. Department stores keep the tightest grip on their business, thereby escaping with a loss of 0.4 per cent.

The average loss from bad debts on installment sales was 1.2 per cent. General clothing stores led with 8 per cent, while coal, wood, lumber and building material dealers brought up the rear with 0.2 per cent.

FALSE ECONOMICS MUST BE ABANDONED

London, England, Nov. 29.—"The world must face the fact that economics of the past has been falsified," said James H. Thomas of the Labor Party Cabinet in an address to American business men. Mr. Thomas is secretary of the National Railway Men's Union. "We are living in an abnormal world," he said. "Revolutions come and revolutions go. One regime or one dictator is superseded by another. It is not an anomaly to say that there is suffering, because of shortage, but because of overproduction!

"I have been in the United States ten times," declared the speaker, "and I think I know what I am talking about when I say that never in your experience have you gone through the hell you will in the next four months."

PLAN TO CONSTRUCT MORE POST OFFICES

Washington, Nov. 29.—Legislation to provide a 20-year program for the construction of post offices, with an immediate authorization of $10,000,000 for the first year to aid unemployment, will be proposed by Representative Kelly at this session of Congress.

The Pennsylvania lawmaker declared that the Federal Government is the largest landlord, the practice of leasing post office quarters. The building program, he said, could be financed out of the $17,500,000 for annual rentals.

JOBLESS AT PEAK

New York, Nov. 29.—Police department figures for heads of families out of work in this city reached 41,555. This is a record number since the police canvass began more than a month ago.

The municipal lodging house sheltered 341,115 homeless men, women and children since the first of the year. This is 8,078 more than the highest total in 1914, when 333,037 were cared for.

STRONG BOXES BULGE

New York, Nov. 29.—"Not in the history of industry have corporations had such an abundance of idle money," says a Wall Street publication.

GREEN URGES FUNDS FOR STRIKE KIDDIES

Washington, Nov. 29.—"Men, women and children in Danville are without food, shelter and adequate clothing," said President Green, in an urgent appeal for financial aid to striking textile workers in the Virginia city.

"This is the sacrifice these workers are making for the cause of trade unionism, for decent wages, the exercise of an American right to join a union and to bargain collectively," said Mr. Green.

"What shall be the answer of millions of trade unionists and their millions of friends to this question? Shall the cry from these heroic, suffering, hungry strikers and their families reach our ears?

"I am making an appeal for a most worthy cause. I am constrained by sentiments of humanity and a sense of justice to plead for help for the Danville strikers. Suffering and sacrifice in Danville are apparent.

"Think of the children, undernourished, underprivileged, innocent victims of an industrial conflict forced upon employes by a ruthless corporation and a cruel management. In this hour of their deepest distress I serve as the instrumentality through which the voiceless victims of economic oppression may appeal to your hearts and your consciences.

"I appeal to you in the name of the A. F. of L., in the name of humanity and in behalf of heroic men, hungry women and children for support. Give freely, give fully, give all you can.

"Send as large a contribution as possible to Frank Morrison, Secretary A. F. of L., Washington, D. C."

7,033 PER CENT GAIN IS "MODEST" PROFIT

New York, Nov. 29.—One of the sources of large fortunes is shown in the records of the old American Electric Company that was absorbed by the present General Electric Company. The American company was organized 50 years ago to market the Thomson arc-light lamp. The stock had a par value of $25 and the 3,500 shares totaled $87,500.

If an investor 50 years ago bought 20 shares of this stock for $500 he would today own 528 shares of General Electric common stock, 79 shares of General Electric special stock and 168 shares of Electric Bond and Share Securities Corporation stock.

These holdings have a market value of approximately $35,669, an increase of 7,033.8 per cent.

HEALTH IS MENACED BY BUSINESS DROP

Albany, N. Y., Nov. 29.—The business depression menaces the health of the people unless there is action and force an extra session, but the conservatives can defeat such attempt by passing a resolution that the appropriations of the previous fiscal year shall apply for the succeeding year.

Progressives believe an extra session is necessary to pass needed legislation. These include the anti-injunction bill, the amendment that would do away with "lame ducks," the Norris bill for government operation of Muscle Shoals and the Wagner unemployment bill.

"So far as I know," said Senator Norris, "the Progressives are the only people in Congress who have a constructive program to offer at this session of Congress." The Nebraska senator said he was voicing his own feelings, but it is known that his attitude is supported by Republican Progressives and a large number of Democrats.

"GO-SLOW" PLAN URGED BY CHICAGO ATTORNEY

Boston, Nov. 29. — Old-fashioned sabotage, dressed in well rounded sentences, was urged by Silas H. Strawn, leading Chicago lawyer, at a meeting of the Boston Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Strawn did not mention sabotage, which is a criminal offense in certain states. This is the way he put over the idea:

"The greatest problem that now confronts this country is to gear down our productive machinery so that it will synchronize with our consumptive capacity."

The Chicago lawyer urged business men to contribute to unemployment funds, not because of justice, or even charity, "but because they are the means of insurance against socialism or even worse."

JOBLESS FIGURES UP; BLEAK WINTER LOOMS

Washington, Nov. 29.—Out-of-work figures for November received at A. F. of L. headquarters from local affiliates show that unemployment is already as serious as it was in the worst month in last winter.

"Such a condition at the beginning of winter months is alarming, as unemployment usually increases, even in normal years, as much as 50 per cent from November to February," the bulletin states. "It is clear from our reports that unemployment this winter will be fully as serious as expected and all efforts to provide work and relief are urgent.

"For the country as a whole unemployment of union members increased from 21 per cent in October to 22 per cent in November. In building trades 41 per cent are now out of work and conditions are already as serious as they were last March.

"In metals the year-end dullness has intensified an extremely bad situation and more are out of work than at any time in the last three years. Thirty per cent are unemployed in clothing and textiles, and printing unemployment is again at the highest point yet reached.

"Part time work has increased from 15 per cent of the membership in October to 18 per cent in November. Nonetheless half the membership in clothing and textile are on part time, 26 per cent in metals, 33 per cent in manufacturing and 25 per cent in food industries and in shipping trades. Doubtless this very large part-time employment represents efforts of some manufacturers to prevent lay-offs by dividing work."

The Bulletin refers to public improvements that are started, work in parks and streets and money collected for relief, but makes this significant statement:

"The present crisis is showing clearly that permanent organization to provide against unemployment is essential."

PARTY HEADS OPPOSE EXTRA CONGRESS MEET

Washington, Nov. 29.—Non-partisanship is most pronounced on whether an extra session of Congress will be held. Progressives in both parties urge an extra session. They are opposed by conservatives, regardless of party.

The session that convenes the first week in December is the final session of the Seventy-first Congress that adjourns by constitutional limitation on March 4. If an extra session is not called by the President after March 4, Congress will not meet until December, 1931.

The present session will devote its time to appropriation bills for the fiscal year beginning July 1 next. Discussion on these bills may delay action and force an extra session, but the conservatives can defeat such attempt by passing a resolution that the appropriations of the previous fiscal year shall apply for the succeeding year.

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HARVARD WAGES STUDY AFTER 1 YEAR'S DELAY

Cambridge, Mass., Nov. 29.—A "comprehensive survey" of wage scales at Harvard University has been launched.

The study came about as the result of the disorder of charwomen last December because men could be employed at a low rate without running counter to the State Minimum Wage Commission.

The discharges were discussed almost continuously until last June, when a general survey of wages was ordered.

Nothing was done until quite recently, when A. L. Endicott, controller of the university, announced that the study had begun. All necessary information can be secured in two weeks.

HIGH BUYING POWER COULD AVERT RECURRING IDLE CRISES, SAY CLERICS

Washington, Nov. 29.—"The worker is obliged to help them. But our country needs, now and permanently, such a change of heart as will, intelligently and firmly determined, so organize and distribute our work and wealth that no one need lack for any length time of employment to earn for himself and those dependent upon him."

This sentence called attention to the joint pastoral letter issued by Catholic bishops at the close of the World War, in which it was declared that a living wage "is only the minimum of justice," and that high wages is the most effective instrument of prosperity.

"Had this passage been heeded during the dozen years since it was written," asserts Archbishop Hanna, "it would in itself gone far to prevent the calamity we now undergo.

"The human and Christian, in contrast to the purely commercial and pagan, ethics of industry, to quote again, will both cure our country of our present malady and prevent its cruel recurrence."

"People are suffering and we are

DRASTIC CURES FOR IDLENESS URGED BY NEW YORK CLERGY

New York, Nov. 29.—Sermons on unemployment by New York clergymen are being marked by stinging indictments against the inability of others to secure work.

Unemployment was characterized as the "nemesis of any civilization," by Rev. George M. Stockdale of St. James' Methodist church. The clergyman called for a conscription of wealth to relieve unemployment, although he declared that this relief is a "mere stop gap" and does not get to the root of the trouble.

"A more equitable distribution of wealth" was demanded by Rev. Dr. Christian F. Reisner at the Broadway Temple Methodist church.

"Something is wrong with our system," said Dr. Reisner, "when honest workmen can be reduced to starvation by unemployment in a few weeks, while the few live in abundance because they have either by superior ability or to invest wisely, or accidentally to chose the right kind of stock will come when America must, in the light of such a Father God as we believe sits on the throne, be ashamed of the unequal distribution of wealth.

"It is an undying shame and disgrace to a land of untold wealth that periodically thousands of her citizens should be compelled to go begging for the mere necessities of life while in the same breath the sanation of plenty," said Dr. Reisner.

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine also aided in solving the unemployment problem "in the only way in which it can be solved," by giving out contracts totaling more than $1,000,000 for work on the new cathedral, Dean Milo H. Gates declared in his sermon.

"What the unemployed want is not charity but work," he said. "The splendid declarations of the labor unions prove this."